

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

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USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 19311

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FR, PO

SUBJECT: FRENCH PERCEPTIONS ON PORTUGAL

1. QUAI UN DEPUTY POLITICAL DIRECTOR LEPRETTE TOLD EMBOFF JULY 24 THAT SPINOLA APPARENTLY DID VISIT FRANCE RECENTLY, ALTHOUGH EXACT DETAILS ARE HARD TO ESTABLISH. ACCORDING LEPRETTE, WHO ASKED THAT THIS BE CLOSELY HELD, SPINOLA WAS IN GENEVA AND WOULD HAVE HAD NO GREAT DIFFICULTY IN SLIPPING INTO FRANCE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH AUTHORITIES. LEPRETTE SAID SPINOLA REPORTEDLY HAD A BRAZILIAN PASSPORT, ADDING THIS WOULD NOT REQUIRE FRENCH VISA FOR TEMPORARY ENTRANCE.

2. SEPARATELY, QUAI SOUTH WEST EUROPE DESK OFFICER DEBENEST GAVE AS HER PURELY PERSONAL OPINION PREDICTION THAT PORTUGAL NOW HEADED BACK TOWARD RIGHTIST DICTATORSHIP. SHE EMPHASIZED THAT PCP HAS LITTLE SUPPORT AMONG EITHER MASSES OR EVEN AFM LEADERSHIP. ALSO, EVENTS OF LAST YEAR MAKE IT UNLIKELY PORTUGAL WILL SOON ACHIEVE DEMOCRATIC BALANCE. SINCE, IN DEBENEST'S
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OPINION, SITUATION CANNOT CONTINUE TO BE CHAOTIC

INDEFINITELY, SHE HAS CONCLUDED THAT UNSPECIFIED AND,
AS YET, UNIDENTIFIED FAR-RIGHT ELEMENTS WILL EVENTUALLY
GAIN UPPERHAND.

COMMENT: LEPRETTE WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE CONFIRMED
REPORTS ON SPINOLA VISIT TO FRANCE UNLESS HE HAD GOOD
REASON. ON OTHER HAND, DESK OFFICER DEBENEST'S
PREDICTIONS STRIKE US AS EXERCISE IN PURE LOGIC, SINCE
SHE WAS UNABLE EVEN TO SPECULATE FROM WHERE FASCISTS'
STRENGTH MIGHT COME. NEVERTHELESS, WE PASS IT ALONG
SINCE SHE IS CAREFUL STUDENT OF PORTUGUESE EVENTS
PRESUMABLY WITH ACCESS TO WELL-PLACED FRENCH
SOURCES OF INFORMATION.
GAMMON

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